

# New Haven Federation of Teachers

LOCAL 933



AFL-CIO

*An Affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers*

*David Cicarella  
President*

To: All New Haven Teachers

November 9, 2018

## **Furlough Days**

All union leaders representing colleagues that work at the BOE have once again been asked to consider furlough days. This includes administrators, clerks, paraprofessionals, teachers, executive management, tradesmen, etc. The request was made in the spring, resurfaced in the summer, and now again in the fall. Teachers are split in their opinions on furlough days. Many have contacted me and others in NHFT leadership to express they would be willing to give up 2 or 3 days' pay to potentially save the jobs of our colleagues. Others have stated that while they do sympathize with the plight of our most junior teachers, they are not willing to make any additional sacrifices and are not in favor of furlough days. There is no "right or wrong" here. It is a matter of opinion.

**So how will the NHFT handle this?** First and foremost this will not be a decision for me or the NHFT Executive Board. All "big ticket" items such as a new contract, the calendar for the next school year, etc., has **always** gone to the entire membership for a vote. Furlough days are certainly a "big ticket" item. Despite my pleas not to engage in gossip, rumors, or mere speculation some of our colleagues inexplicably continue to do so. And thus misinformation spreads which leads to unnecessary anxiety. Our position is that if we are to consider bringing furlough days to all teachers for a vote – we need a guarantee of no lay-offs. Our ask is that we have a minimum of a 2 year no lay-off clause. If the NHPS would agree then we would bring this to the membership for a vote. I cannot ask teachers to make the financial sacrifice of furlough days and then potentially have our colleagues still suffer lay-offs. Central office will not give us a guarantee of no layoffs so furlough days will not go to the membership for a vote. We cannot ask teachers to make what may be a useless sacrifice. This decision was agreed upon at our NHFT Executive Board meeting in the spring and re-affirmed at Tuesday's (Nov. 6) meeting. No consideration of furlough days without a guarantee there will be any lay-offs.

**Does this mean there will be more lay-offs?** Not necessarily. The city is working to reduce costs and leverage additional grant money to fill the budget gap which now stands at \$8.8 million. Then why are we insisting on a no-lay-off clause. It is a safety measure to ensure that if teachers were to make this

sacrifice it would not be in vain. We believe the City must employ other revenue raising and cost saving measures and not always ask labor for give backs.

**What is the likelihood that there might be a vote on furlough days?** At this point none. The NHPS has stated they cannot guarantee any layoffs because they do not know what their revenue will be from year to year.

The NHFT will continue to engage the NHPS and the City in talks to work on mitigating the budget deficit. But the issue of furlough days for teachers will not happen given the circumstances I described.

### **NHFT Elections**

Just another friendly reminder that ballots were sent via US mail to all teachers November 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have not received your ballot or it is spoiled (you spilled coffee on it, it arrived damaged, etc.) simply call the NHFT office at 203-773-0266 and ask for NHFT Executive Assistant Florence DeVito. She will contact MK Elections for you and a new ballot will be promptly mailed to you. Or you can email [caleb@mkelections.com](mailto:caleb@mkelections.com) directly and request a replacement ballot.